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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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09/704,638

11/01/2000

Eric W. Doerr

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(MS#150521.1)

4500

7590

03/01/2004

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EXAMINER

IRSHADULLAH, M

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3623

DATE MAILED: 03/01/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

SW

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	<b>Application No.</b>	<b>Applicant(s)</b>	
	09/704,638	DOERR ET AL.	
	<b>Examiner</b>	<b>Art Unit</b>	
	M. Irshadullah	3623	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 01 November 2000.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**.                      2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-16 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-16 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 12 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All    b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- \* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)             | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)                     |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)    | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____  |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____   | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                                    |

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Claim Objections***

1. Claim 12 is objected to because of the following informalities:

Two claims are numbered as Claim 12. Although the second of the two and rest of the claims are being treated as claims 13-16, it is requested to please amend the claim numbers in response this Office Action.

Appropriate correction is appreciably required.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

3. Claims 1-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Using Microsoft Project 4 for Windows by Tim Pyron et al (April 1994), hereinafter referred to as Pyron et al.

Pyron et al disclose:

Claim 1. A computer-implemented system for displaying an estimated duration character in a field, where the estimated duration character is text that indicates that a time period duration is estimated, comprising:

a) a user interface for receiving a duration value string, where the duration value string is text that indicates the time period duration and whether the time period duration

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is estimated (Page 325, Fig. 12.6 {window with box: Duration showing 45d, 0d, 25d, 3w etc.} and page 341, lines 1-7, wherein cited "window" representing "user interface", "45d, 3w etc." indicating "receiving duration value string" comprising "time span or periods of 45d or 45 days, 3w or 3 weeks etc. in text" and cited "revised duration estimate" indicating that said "duration" is "estimate or estimated" and that the reference provides "estimating function or functionality");

b) a parser for separating the duration value string so that it can be interpreted (Page 448, Setting and Clearing Page Breaks, lines 1-6, wherein "printing a page at a user set page break" and "new page stating at a specific task or resource" indicating the availability and use of a "parser" which a user would employ for "breaking or separating" above discussed duration string and reference system would "consider or judge or interpret" the same as such. Moreover, use of parser is so long before practiced in the computer arts, that at the time of instant invention a user would consider its use as inherent, for support please see enclosed Srinivasan Patent 5,548,506, col. 7, lines 37-39);

c) a storage for storing the separated duration value string (Page 5, Beefed Up Power, lines 4-7, wherein "saving in ODBC" clearly indicating provision of "storing" means {storage} and function which a user a user would use for storing above discussed broken or separated estimated duration value string); and

d) a display for interpreting the duration value string and for showing the estimated duration character in the field (Page 516, Selecting the Tasks That Display the Bar, lines 1-8, wherein "displaying" requisite bar pointing to availability of a "display"

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means and function, which a user would use to considering or judging or interpreting the displayed above discussed estimated duration entries or characters, such as 45d as 45 days, 3w as 3 weeks etc. and said entries or characters are depicted or shown in the specified spaces or fields).

Claim 2. The system of claim 1, wherein the duration value string comprises:

a) a duration value, which is the value internally used by the system (As discussed above, 45d, 3w etc. time spans or duration values which MS Project system would use or internally use for producing or generating some results, such as "completed percentage, remaining duration, new estimated duration etc., page 341, lines 1-7");

b) a duration display type, which indicates how the duration should be displayed (Above discussed 45d, 3w etc. represent the form or type of span or duration, such as days {d}, weeks {w} of etc. and above discussed display means and function would output or depict or display in said forms or types); and

c) an estimated flag, which indicates that the estimated duration character should be displayed (Page 341, lines 5-6, wherein "leaving actual duration unchanged" "displaying completed and remaining" duration pointing to provision of "flag" or "flagging" function which a user would use for claimed purpose).

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Claim 3. The system of claim 1 or 2, wherein the storage comprises:

a) a duration value memory for storing the duration value (Page 5, lines 4-7, wherein a user would use cited "database ODBC and partitions thereof" for claimed purpose);

b) a duration display type memory for storing the duration display type (Page 5, lines 4-7, wherein a user would use cited "database ODBC and partitions thereof" for claimed purpose); and

c) an estimated flag memory for storing the estimated flags (Page 5, lines 4-7, wherein a user would use cited "database ODBC and partitions thereof" for claimed purpose).

Claim 4. The computer-implemented method for displaying an estimated duration character in a field, where the estimated duration character is text that indicates that a time period duration is estimated, comprising the steps of:

a) determining if sheet mode or dialog mode should be used, the sheet mode being where the user enters a duration value, where the duration value is the value internally used, and the estimated duration character in the field, and the dialog mode being where the user accesses a dialog box to enter the duration value in a duration field and either enter the estimated duration character in a duration field, where the duration field is a field holding duration information, or checks the estimated field, where the estimated field is a field holding information on whether the duration is estimated (Page 454, Selecting the Special Options for views with sheets, lines 1-3 and page 455,

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Fig. 16.9, wherein "choosing view tab in page setup dialog box for seeing specific options" indicating "determining", "dialog box" functioning as a "heading or main interface", providing to the user further options available in response to user's clicking or requesting the main interface or dialog box, such as "page setup". In other words, user would choose or determine to use a main interface or dialog box for obtaining further available options, such as Task sheet and Resource Sheet etc., and would choose or determine to use dialog box's available options, such as Task sheet or Resource Sheet when he wants to "setup", "format" changing "fonts" etc, page 548, Formatting the Sheets: lines 1-8, relating to some thing, like a task, resource etc., and see discussion about duration value string, estimated duration etc. in Applicant's claim 1) above; and

b) running the sheet mode or the dialog mode (Page 455, lines 1-13, wherein user's clicking a mouse button or pressing a key of a keyboard on the options in a dialog box or sheet and system's depicting or displaying results of said actions indicating "executing or implementing or running" chosen or determined to use dialog box or sheet options).

Claim 5. The method of claim 4, wherein the steps of determining if the sheet mode should be used comprises the steps of:

a) moving a cursor to the field where the user wants to enter the time period duration (Page 55, lines 3-5, wherein "clicking mouse button" or pressing key of keyboard indicating "moving the cursor" to requisite space or field for performing some action including the claimed one); and

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b) clicking the cursor once on the field where the user wants to enter the time period duration (As discussed above).

Claim 6. The method of claim 4, wherein the step of determining if the dialog mode should be used comprises the steps of:

moving a cursor to the field where the user wants to enter the time period duration (See discussion of claim 5a) above); and

clicking the cursor twice on the field where the user wants to enter the time period duration or using a tool bar command (Page 150: Understanding the Calendar View, lines 14-16, wherein "double clicking" indicating "clicking the curser twice" and user would use said "double clicking" function for claimed purpose).

Claim 7. The method of claim 4, wherein the step of running the sheet mode further comprises the steps of:

a) inputting a duration value string, where the duration value string is text that indicates the duration and whether the duration is estimated (Page 61, The Entry Bar, lines 4-8, wherein "entering" data indicating "inputting" function which a user would use for claimed purpose);

b) separating the duration value string into a duration value, where the duration value is the value internally used by the system, a duration display type, where the duration display type indicates how the duration should be displayed; and an estimated



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flag, where the estimated flag indicates that the estimated duration character should be displayed (See discussion of Applicant's claims 1b), 2b) and 2c) above);

c) storing the duration value in a duration value memory (See discussion of Applicant's claim 3a) above);

d) storing the duration display type in a duration display type memory (See discussion of Applicant's claim 3b) above);

e) determining if the estimated flag is set to "yes" or "no" (Page 675, rectangle A depicting "Yes", "No" buttons, wherein said buttons' values implemented by the system returning "Yes" or "No" in response to user's considered or judged action, indicating user's "determining" the use of appropriate one including claimed "setting of flag" to Yes or No);

f) storing the estimated flag in an estimated flag memory if the estimated flag is set to "yes" (See discussion of Applicant's claim 3c) above)

g) displaying the duration value in the correct duration display type, and the estimated duration character if the estimated flag is stored in the estimated flag memory (See discussion of Applicant's claim 1d) above, wherein a user would use cited "display" means and function for claimed purpose).

Claim 8. The method of claim 4, wherein the step of running the dialog mode further comprises the steps of:

a) creating copies of the duration fields and the estimated field (Page 57, Copy Dialog Box, wherein a user would use cited "copying" function for claimed purpose);

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b) inputting the duration value string, where the duration value string is text that indicates the time period duration and whether the duration is estimated (Page 61, The Entry Bar, lines 4-8, wherein "entering" data indicating "inputting" function which a user would use for claimed purpose);

c) separating the duration value string into a duration value, where the duration value is the value internally used by the system, a duration display type, where the duration display type indicates how the duration should be displayed; and an estimated flag, where the estimated flag indicate that the estimated duration character should be displayed (See discussion of Applicant's claim 7b) above);

e) storing the duration value in a duration value memory (See discussion of Applicant's claim 7c) above);

f) storing the duration display type in a duration display type memory (See discussion of Applicant's claim 7d) above);

g) determining if the estimated flag is set to "yes" or "no" (See discussion of Applicant's claim 7e) above);

storing the estimated flag in an estimated flag memory if the estimated flag is set to "yes" (See discussion of Applicant's claim 7f) above);

h) closing the dialog box (Page 38, line 1, wherein a user would use cited "closing" command for claimed purpose);

i) displaying the duration value in the correct duration display type, and the estimated duration character if the estimated flag is stored in the estimated flag memory (See discussion of Applicant's claim 7g) above).

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Claim 9. The method of claim 8, wherein the step of closing the dialog box comprises the steps of:

a) determining whether the user wants to "OK" or "cancel" the user choice data (Page 35, wherein rectangle showing "OK" and "Cancel" options, which a user would use for claimed purpose);

b) duplicating the duration value, the duration display type, and estimated flag if the user wants to "OK" the user choice data (Page 35, wherein rectangle showing "OK" and "Cancel" options, which a user would use for claimed purpose); and

c) closing the dialog box without duplicating the duration value, duration display type, and estimated flag if the user chooses "cancel" (Page 38, line 1, wherein a user would use cited "closing" command for claimed purpose and when a user would use cited closing command, requisite dialog box would end or close and no data or value would appear or duplicated from the system's above discussed database or memory).

Claim 10. The method of claim 7 or 8, wherein the step of separating the duration value string comprises the steps of:

a) identifying the duration value and the duration display type in the duration value string Page 181, Name, line 1, wherein "identifying resource name" indicating availability of "identifying" function which a user would use for claimed purpose);

b) checking the estimated flag memory to see if any unidentified characters in the duration value string is a default estimated duration character, where the default estimated duration character is the default text that is used to indicate that the time

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period duration is estimated (Page 341, last para, line 5, wherein a user would use "tracking or checking" function for claimed purpose); and

c) setting the estimated flag to "yes" if any unidentified characters in the duration value string is the default estimated duration character (Page 18, ID, line 2, wherein a user would use "assigning or setting" function for claimed purpose);

d) checking the estimated flag memory to see if any of the unidentified characters in the duration value string is an alternate estimated duration character, where the alternate estimated duration character is alternate text that is used to indicate that the time period duration is estimated (As discussed in b) above);

e) setting the estimated flag to "yes" if any of the unidentified characters in the duration value string is the alternate estimated duration character (As discussed in 1c) above);

f) removing all default estimated duration characters and all alternate estimation duration characters (Page 214, line 1, wherein a user would use "removing" function for claimed purpose); and

g) setting the estimated flag to "no" if none of the unidentified characters in the duration value string are not the default estimated duration character or the alternate estimated duration character (As discussed in c) above).

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Claim 11. The method of claim 7 or 8, wherein said step of displaying the duration value comprises the steps of:

a) obtaining the duration value (Page 618, Fig. 22.1, data or values "40d, 0d, 3w etc." under Duration are "received or obtained" ones when a user used above discussed "display" function and means);

b) obtaining the duration display type (As discussed above, wherein 40d representing the "form or type" 40 days and 3w representing form or type of "3 weeks" span or duration);

c) combining the duration value and the duration display type into a human readable string (Page 469, Creating a Combination view, lines 1-3, wherein a user would use "combining" function for claimed purpose);

d) checking the estimated flag to see if it is set to "yes" or "no" (See discussion of Applicant's claim 10d) above);

e) checking a user option to display the estimated duration character to see if it is set to "yes" or "no" (See discussion of Applicant's claim 10d) above);

f) displaying the duration value in the correct duration display type and the estimated duration character if the estimated flag and the user choice are set to "yes" (See discussion of Applicant's claim 1d) above, wherein a user would use "display" means and function for claimed purpose); and

g) displaying the duration value in the correct duration display type if the estimated flag or the user choice is "no" (As discussed above).

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Claim 12. The method of claim 11, wherein said step of displaying the duration value in the correct duration display type, and the estimated duration character if the estimated flag and the user choice are set to "yes" comprises the steps of:

a) determining the position for the estimated duration character and adding the estimated duration character to the human readable string (See discussion of Applicant's claim 7e) above);

determining the default estimated duration character and adding the default estimated duration character to the human readable string (See discussion of Applicant's claim 7e) above); and

displaying the duration value in the correct duration display type and the estimated duration character (See discussion of Applicant's claim 11f) above).

Claim 13. The method of claim 4, further comprising the step of: allowing the user to select an option to not display the estimated duration character Page 57, 2., wherein a user would use {allowed to} "select" function for claimed purpose).

Claim 14. The method of claim 4, further comprising the step of: allowing the user to select an option to have new tasks have estimated duration characters until the user chooses to enter a duration value As discussed in claim 13 above).

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Claim 15. The method of claim 4, further comprising the step of:  
allowing the user to filter a task list to display only tasks that have estimated duration characters (Page 478, Using And Creating Filters, lines 1-14, wherein a user would use {allowed to} "filtering" function for claimed purpose).

Claim 16. The method of claim 4, further comprising the step of:  
designating a summary level task, where a summary level task has subtasks, with an estimated duration character if any of the subtasks have estimated duration characters (Page 118, lines 5-8, wherein "summary task" representing "summary level task" and "subordinate task" representing "subtasks" and as discussed above "40d, 3w etc." indicating "estimated duration characters" and same would relate to said subtasks).

### ***Conclusion***

4. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

A) Curtis et al., US Patent 6,687,902 B1. Method, System And Program For Deleting User Selected File Sets Of A Program.

B) Gatto, US Patent 6,681,211 B1. Security Analyst Estimates Performance Viewing System And Method.

C) Groath et al., US Patent 6,571,285 B1. Providing And Integrated Service Assurance Environment For A Network.

D) Bergan et al., US Patent 6,322,366 B1. Instructional Management System.

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E) Bagne, US Patent 6,317,700 B1. Computational Method And System To Perform Empirical Induction.

F) Brandt et al., US Patent 6,108,673. System For Creating A Form From A Template That Includes Replication Block.

G) Srinivasan, US Patent 5,548,506. Automated, Electronic Network Based, Project Management server System For Managing Multiple Work-Groups.

H) Nakayama, US Patent 5,249,240. Program Creating Method.

I) Okamoto, US Patent 4,813,010. Document Processing Using Heading Rules Storage And Retrieval System For Generating Documents With Hierarchical Logical Architecture.

5. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to M. Irshadullah whose telephone number is (703) 308-6683. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday 11:00-5:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tariq Hafiz can be reached on (703) 305-9643. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-872-9326 and for after Final 703-872-9327.



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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



M. Irshadullah  
February 09, 2004



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